A LETTER, giving 17

A

DESCRIPTION

OF THE

ISTHMUS

OF

DARIAN:

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

(Where the SCOT'S *COLONIE* is settled;)

From a *GENTLEMAN* who lives there at present.

With an *Account* of the *Fertilneſs* of the *Soil*, The *Quality* of the *Air*, The *Manners* of the *Inhabitants*, And the *Nature* of the *Plants*, and *Animals*, *&c*

AND

A particular *MAPP* of the *Iſthmus*, and Entrance to the *River* of *DARIAN*.

EDINBURGH,

Printed for *John Mackie*, in the *Parliament-Cloſs*, and *James Wardlaw* on the North Side of the *Street* a little below the *Croſs*, at the ſign of the *Bible*. Price 7 *Pence*.

M. DC. XC. IX.

Wrail

A *LETTER*, *giving a* Deſcription *of the* Iſthmus *of* Darian, *(where the* Scot's Colony *is ſettled) from a* Gentleman *who lives there at preſent.*

SIR,

CONform to your Deſire, and mine own Promiſe: I have ſent You the following Deſcription of *Darian*; I was up the Country when the two Gentlemen went for *Scotland* who brought the News of our arrival: but having now an Occaſion I have ſent you the following Account.

You deſired a particular Account of the ſaid *Darian*, long ſince, And according to your Deſire, I have ſent a particular Account of the *Nature* of the *Ground*, *Animals*, *Fruits*, and *Trees*; and what *Minerals* they have, with a Draught of the Place, The *Habits* of their *Kings* and *Queens*, The *Form* of their *Houſes*, The *Way* of their *Fighting* with the *Spaniards* and other Enemies.

Since our ſafe Arrival We have vieued, tranſverſ'd, and gone about near an hundered Miles in the Country formerly called *Darian*: but We have named it *CALEDONIA*, and there is a Fort very conveniently built, which We call *New-EDINBURGH*.

The *Iſthmus* of *Darian* is ſituated in the *Main-Land* of *America*, on the North of the *Equinoctial Line*, 8 *degr.* 11 *min. Latitude*; The Land is narrower from the *North* to

the *South* Sea, which you will see by the *Mapp*: As for the great *River* of *Darian*, it is situated something to the *Eastward* of the *Golden Island*.

The golden Island is but a small place, not much bigger than *Inch-Keith* in the *Firth* of *Forth*.

There are a great many Islands westward from the golden Island 14. *Leagues* called *Zanblas* Islands.

The Situation of our *Fort* does ly very conveniently, having a *Bay* upon the *West*, with many small *Rocks*, which make it inaccessable; On the *East*, the great River of *Darian*.

The *Soil* is as good here, as in any other place in *America*; up the Country there are long Ranges of *Mountains*, well cloathed with *Trees*, which for the most part are *Palm*, and *Yellow-Sanders*; The Inhabitants call it *Bois de Chandle*, or in English *Candle-Wood*; It burns like a Candle, and serves them with Light while they fish in the Night time. Here grows also *Lignum Sanctum*, or *Guiacum*, its Virtues are very well known, more especially to those who observe not well the VII. Commandment, and are giv'n to impure Copulations; Physicians drawing hence in severall Compositions the greatest Antidote against all venereall Deseases, as also for cold and vitious Humors.

The Tree likewise that affords *Gummi Elemi* grows here in great Aboundance; As doth *Radix China*, or *China-Root*;

There is a *Prickle Palm*, so call'd because it is infinitly full of *Prickles* from the *Root* to the *Leaves*; with these Prickles the *Indians* use to torment the Prisoners they take in Battle, they tye them to a Tree, then takeing these Thorns they put them into little Pellets of Cotton dipt in Oil, and stick them

in

in the Sides of the miſerable priſoners, as thick as the Briſtles of an *Hedg-Hogg*: which cauſe an incredible Torment to the Patient; Then they ſet them a Fire, and if the tormented Priſoner ſing in the Midſt of his Torments: He is eſteem'd a couragious Soldier, who neither fears his Enemies nor the Torture; But if on the contrary, He cry out, they eſteem him a Coward, and unworthy of any Memory. This Cuſtom was told me by an *Indian*, who ſaid He had uſed his Enemy thus, oftentimes. But to return to the *Prickle-Palm*, I ſhall only tell you that theſe Palm Trees in this only differ from the ordinary *Palms*, The *Leaves* are like theſe of other *Palm* Trees, only a little bigger, and rounder, and full of little *Kernels*, as pleaſeing to the Taſte as the *Walnuts* in *Europe*. The *Wine-Palm* is ſo call'd from the Aboundance of Wine gathered from it, of an extraordinary Shape or Form; for from the *Root* up half Way, it is only three or four Inches thick; but upward, ſomething above two thirds of its Height; It is as big, and as thick, as an ordinary Bucket, & within it is full of a certain Matter very like a ſlender Stock of white *Cabbage*, which is a very juicy of a Liquor much pleaſing to the Palate; This Liquor after Fermentation and Settling of the Grounds, becomes very good and clear Wine.

The *Fruit* is much like to that of other *Palms*, but ſmaller, like *Cherries*; To write farther of the Trees, it would fill a great many Sheets; But I will only name them: *Palm a Chapelet*, or *Roſary-Palm*, ſo called by the *French*, and *Spaniards*; *Caremit-Tree*, very like our *Pear-Tree*, very pleaſing to the Taſte; *Genpa-Trees*, like to our *Cherry Trees*; beſides theſe, there are diverſe other Sorts of Trees, as *Cedars* in great Aboundance, which this Part of the World produces; They are very uſefull for building Ships and Canoa's, Theſe *Canoa's*

noa's are like little Ferry-Boats, being made only of one Tree hollowed, and fitted, for the Sea: They are ſo ſwift, that they may be called *Neptun's POST-HORSES.* The *Indians* make theſe *Canoa's* without any Iron Inſtruments, by only burning the Trees nigh the Root, and then ſo governing the fire, as nothing is burnt more than what they would have; Some have *Hatches* of *Flint* wherewith they ſcrape or pare off whatſoever are burnt too far, and theſe by fire only they give that ſhape which renders them capable of navigating 60. or 80. *Leagues* with ordinary Security. Here is *Baſile-Wood*, *Taco* is another Sort of Tree; Here are a great many *Cabbage-Trees*, the *Cabbage* growing on the Top of it. Here grows the *Coco-Nut*, of which the *Chacolat* is made. Here grows the *Pinn-Apple*, and a great dale of *Plantine*, or *Sugar-Canes*, of which they make *Sugar*; And a great dale of other Trees, which being too tedious to give you an Account of, I forbear; You may have any *Trees*, *Roots*, or *Herbs*, that grow in *Europe* as well as others that will not grow there, as *Mammi*; *&c.* You may have a great dale of *Tobacco* if you plant, much better than in any Place to the Northward.

I ſhall give you an Account of the makeing *Sugar* & *Indigo* in another place.

Flies as Inſects ſeverall Sorts of them, theſe are as big as Horſe-Flies in *Europe*, and denting themſelves upon Mens Bodys, ſtick and ſuck the Blood till they can no longer fly, which obliges the Inhabitants to wear continually Branches of Trees to Fan them away; There are a great dale of other Sorts, as *Cochinilla's*; There are monſtruous *Adders* which are very frequent in theſe Places, upon which Account I durſt never ly on the Graſs; Here are very good Land *Tortoiſes*, which are very good meat; There are alſo *Crocodiles*, I could tell you, a good true ſtory about One of them, but being too tedious I forbear.

There

There is a great dale of *Doggs*, *Deer*, *Rabbets*, and *Monkeys*, and many other Sorts of Quadrupeds, which Ye have not the like of in *Europe*.

You have a great dale of all Sorts of Fowls many wherof do not breed in *Europe*, as *Parrots*; They make their Nests in Holes of *Palmito* Trees, which Holes are before made by other Birds, for they are not capable of excavating any wood tho' never so soft, having their own Bills too crooked and blunt; Hence provident Nature hath supplyed them with the Labour of other Birds called *Carpenteros*, or *Carpinters*; These are no bigger than *Sparrows*: Yet having such hard and pierceing Bills, that no Iron Instrument can be made fitter to excavate any Tree, though never so solid, and hard; And these Holes the Parrots getting Possession of build their Nests.

Of *Pigeons* of all Sorts we are aboundantly provided; There is another small Bird here called *Cabreros*, or *Goat-Keepers*, and chiefly feed upon *Crabs* of the *Sea*; In these Birds are seaven distinct *Bladders* of *Gall*, and their Flesh is as bitter as *Aloes*: Of these We have aboundance.

There are very many *Crows*, or *Ravens*, more troublesome, than usefull, who make a most hideous Noise,.

We have several fruits & roots very usefull, as *Potatos*, they dres them only by well boiling them in a Kettle, with fair clean water; Then we cover them with a Cloath for half an Hour where they become as soft as boiled *Chesnutes*; Of the said *Potatos* we make a Drink called *Maiz*: They cut them into small slices, and cover them with hot water; when they are well imbibed they press them through a course Cloath, and the *Liquor* that comes throgh tho something thick they keep in Vessels made for that Purpose; Hereafter settling two or three Days, it works: And having thrown off its *Lees*, is

fit

fit for Drink They uſe with great Delight, and tho' it be ſomewhat ſour : Yet it is very pleaſant, ſubſtantial, and extraordinary wholſome ; The Invention of this is wholly owing to the *Indians*, as well as many other things found out for the Preſervation of Mans Life.

There is a Root called by the Indians *Cazave* of which they make a Liquor called *Vey-Con* much like unto *Beer*.

Another Fruit called *Bananas*, is an excellent Liquor, which in Strength, and Pleaſantneſs of Taſt, may be compared to the beſt Wines of *Spain* : But this Liquor eaſily cauſes Drunkenneſs.

VVe begin now to plant *Tobacco* for Trade ; The Manner whereof is this : VVe make Bedds of Earth 12. Foot ſquare, theſe thay cover with *Palmito* Leaves, that the Rays of the *Sun* may not reach the Earth ; Then we water them when it doth not rain, as we do our Gardens in *Europe* ; Being grown about the Bigneſs of young *Lettuce* : we tranſplant it into ſtreight Lines in ſpacious Fields, ſetting every Plant 3. Foot diſtant from each other ; The *Tobacco* muſt be weeded very careſully : ſeing the leaſt Root of any other Herb comeing near it hinders its Grouth.

There is a ſort of Fiſh which the *Indians* many times eat of it is much like unto a *Cow*, becauſe its Head, Noſe, and Teeth, are very like to them ; They are found commonly where under the Depth of the waters its full of Graſs, in which its thought they feed ; They have no Ears, but in place of them two little Holes, as wide as ones little finger ; Near the Neck thy have two Finns, under which are two Uders, like the Breaſt of a VVoman ; The Skin is very cloſe, this Skin on the Back is two fingor thick which being dryed is as hard as whalebone, and may ſerve to make walking-ſtaffs

the Belly is in all things like that of a *Cow*, as far as the *Reins*; their manner of engendring is the ſame with that of a land Cow, the Male being every way like that of a *Bull*; they conceave and breed but once, but what Time they go with *Calf*, I could learn; Theſe Fiſhes have a very acute Senſe of *Hearing*, ſo as in takeing them the fiſher-men makeing not the leaſt Noiſe do not row unleſs very ſlightly, for this reaſon they uſe certain Inſtruments for Rowing, by the *Indians* called *Pagayos* with which they row without any Noiſe to fright the fiſh while they are a fiſhing they ſpeak not one to another only make ſigns, they dart them with Javelins having two Hooks at the End; Theſe fiſh are ordinarly from 20 to 24 Foot long; Their Fleſh is good to eat, being in like in colour to that of a land Cow, but in taſte to Pork It hath much *Fat*, or *Greaſe*, which We make Oil of.

We have alſo another fiſh called *Tortoiſe*, of an indifferent Bigneſs, and of a green Colour, their Scales are ſomewhat hard, and of a very pleaſant Taſte; There is another Sort ſomewhat ſmaller; this Sort commonly keep themſelves among the Rocks, whence they crawl out for Food, which is generally *Sea-Apples*; Theſe other above mentioned, feed on *Graſs*, which grows in the Water on the ſandy Banks; Their Eggs are almoſt like theſe of a *Crocodile*, but without any *ſhell*, being only covered with a thin *film*; They are found in ſuch prodigious Quantitys along the ſhore, that were they not frequently deſtroy'd by Birds, the Seas would abound with *Tortoiſes*.

The Way and Manner of fiſhing them is as follows; *viz.* by makeing a great Nail, or Kind of Dart; this they fix at the End of a long Pole, with which they kill the *Tortoiſes* whenever they appear above Water.

The *Indians* for the moſt part are very dextrous in takeing theſe *Tortoiſes*.

I will give you an Account of our ſhooting of ſome *Monkeys*, and *Birds* called *Pheaſants*; The Toil of ſhooting did ſeem, at leaſt to me, to be ſufficiently compenſated with the Pleaſure of killing the *Monkeys*, for at theſe We made ordinarly 15 or 16 ſhot before We could kill three or four, ſo nimbly would they eſcape our Hands, and aim even after being much wounded; On the other ſide it was a Diverſion to ſee the femal Monkeys carry their little Ones on their backs when any Perſon paſſed under the Trees where theſe Monkeys are ſitting; They will commonly ſquirt their Excrements upon our Heads and Cloaths; likewiſe if ſhooting at any, one happen to be wounded, the reſt flock about him, and do lay their Paws upon the Wound to hinder the blood from iſſuing forth, others gather *Moſs* from the Trees and thruſt into the Wound, and hereby ſtop the Blood; At other times they gather ſuch or ſuch *Herbs*, and cheuing them in their Mouth apply as Poultties, all which cauſed in Me great Admiration, ſeing ſuch ſtrange Actions in theſe irrational Creatures, which teſtified the fidelity and love they had for one another.

I ſhall give you an Account, by the way, of the *People*; I have learned to ſpeak ſomewhat of the *Language* by One of them them who can ſpeak tolerable good *Engliſh*.

I enquir'd into their *Cuſtoms*, *Lives*, and *Policy*: whereof I give you this Account; They are governed by a King, and ſeverall Princes: they have generally a great Hatred againſt the *Spaniards*, There are a great many perſons of them; they are very courtious to any that give them any thing. Here are two Sorts of People of them: The one Sort cultivates the Ground, and make Plantations; theſe are moſt numerous, the

the other is a lazy ſort, never ſeen but at Night. They have *Hutts* that they live in all Day, till Night; they not careing for any other Habitation

They uſe no other Cloaths than an *Apron* ty'd to their Middle, comeing down ſo as to hide their *Privitys*; ſuch Aprons are made of the *Rinds* of *Trees*, which they ſtrongly beat upon *Stones* till they are ſofned; The ſame they uſe for *Bed-Cloaths*, except a few who make them of *Cotton*, they are whiter than the whiteſt in *Scotland*.

The other is of a *Browniſh* Colour, but very handſome Bodys of *Men* and *Women* tightly limb'd, the Men of them are verie dextruous at *Bow* and *Arrow*, and very good *ſpears* the common Sort uſe ſpears of *timber*, the points are ſhod with *Iron*, or *teeth* of *Crocodiles*. They are moſt dextruous in *Swimming*, I did never ſee the like of them in *Doucking* for they will continue near half an Hour below the *Water*.

I could never learn what *Religion* they have, all I could learn was they neither believe in, nor ſerve the *Devil*: as many other Nations in *America*, do; Hereby they are not ſo much tormented by him as other Nations are. They are very attentive at our Form of *Worſhip*; they did tell me they did not like *Spaniards* Religion, for they are as ill as thoſe that worſhip the *Devil*, for that Religion can not be good which is ſo cruel.

Their ordinary Food conſiſts in ſeverall *Fruits*, a little indian *Corn*; Fruits, ſuch as *Bananas*, *Racoves*, *Ananas*, *Potatos*, *Cazave*; As alſo *Crabs*, and ſeverall *Fiſh*, which they kill in the ſea with *Datts*, which they are wonderfully dextruous at.

They are pretty expert in makeing certain pleaſant and de-

licat *Liquors*; The commoneſt among them is called *Achioc*, this is made of a certain *Seed* of *Palm-tree*, bruiſed and ſteept in hot water, till it be ſettled at the Bottom. This Liquor being ſtrain'd off, hath a pleaſant *taſte*, and is very nouriſhing. Other ſorts of liquors they prepare, which I ſhall omit for brevity; only I'll ſay ſomething of that made of *Platanos*. Theſe they knead hot with water, and then put into great *Calabaſhes*, full of cold water for eight Days, during which it ferments as well as the beſt wine. This Liquor they drink for Pleaſure, and as a great Regale, ſo that when they invite any of their Friends, or Relations, they cannot treat them better than with this pleaſant Drink.

They are very unskilful in dreſſing Victuals; ſo that they very ſeldom treat one another with Banquets. But when they invite others they deſire them to come and drink of their Liquors. Before the invited Perſons come to their Houſe, thoſe that expect them, comb their Hair verie well, and anoint their Faces with the Oil of *Palm*, mixt with a black Tincture which renders them very hideous. The women, alſo dawb their Faces with another Sort of Stuff, which makes them look as red as *Crimſon*. And ſuch are their greateſt Ornament, and Attire. Then He that invites, takes his Arms, which are three or four *Azagayas*, and goes out his *Cottage* 3 or 400 Steps, to wait for, and receive the invited perſons. As ſoon as they draw nigh, he falls down on the Ground, lying flat on his Face, without any Motion, as if he were dead; being thus proſtrat, the invited Friends take him up, and ſet him on his Feet, and go altogether to the *Hutt*. Here the Perſons invited, uſe the ſame Ceremony falling down to the Ground, as the Inviter did before. But he lifts them up one by one, and giving them his Hand, conducts them into his Cottage

Cottage, where he cauſes them to ſit. The VVomen on theſe Occaſions uſe few, or no Ceremonys.

Being thus brought into the Houſe, they are preſented every one with a *Calabaſh*, of about two *Pynts* of *Scotiſh* Meaſure, full of *Achioc* almoſt as thick as Water-Gruel, or Children-Pap. Theſe they are to drink off, and get down at any Rate.

Theſe Calabaſhes being emptied, the Maſter of the Houſe, with many Ceremonys, goés about the Room, and gathereth his Calabaſhes. And this Drinking hitherto is reckon'd but one Wellcome. Afterwards, they drink of the *Achioch* above mention'd, to which they were invited.

Then follow many Songs and Dances, and 1000 Careſſes, to the Women; So that oftentemes, for a Teſtimony of their great Love, they take their Darts, and with the points, they pierce and wound their genital parts. This I could believe, though often affirmed to me, till my own Eyes were Witneſſes of theſe and the like actions. Neither only on this Occaſion do they uſe this Ceremony of pierceing their Genitals, but alſo when they make love to any Woman, thereby to let them underſtand the Greatneſs of their Affection, and Conſtancy.

They marry not any yeung Maid without the Conſent of her Parents. If any deſires to take a Wife, he is firſt examined by the Damſels Father concerning ſeverall Sorts of good Husbandry. Theſe are commonly, whether He can make *Azagayas*, Darts for fiſhing; or ſpin a certain *Thread*, which they uſe about their Arrows. Having anſwered to Satisfaction, the Examiner cals to his Daughter, for a little *Cabellaſh* full of *Achioc*. Of this he drinks firſt; then gives the *Cup* to the young Man; and He to the Bride, who drinks it out and with this only Ceremony the *Marriage* is made. When

any

any one drinks to the Health of another, the ſecond Perſon is to drink out the Liquor, left in the *Calabaſh*, but in Caſe of Marriage, as was ſaid, it is conſum'd only among them three : And the Bride allways obtaining, by far, the greater ſhare.

When the *Woman* lys in, neither She nor her Husband obſerve the Time, coſtomarie among the *Carribes* ; But as ſoon as the VVoman is delevered, ſhe goes to the next *River*, *Brook* or *Fountain*, and waſhes the new-born Creature, ſwathing it up in certain *Rowlers*, or *Swath-Bands*, there call'd *Cabalas*. This done ſhe goes about Her ordinarie Labour. When the *Man* dies, his Wife burys Him with all his *Azagayas*, *Aprons*, and *Ear-Jewels* ; and comes every Day to her Husbands *Grave* bringing Him *Meat*, and *Drink*, for a whole *Year* after.

Their *Years* they reckon by *Moons*, allowing fifteen to every Year, which makes their entire *Circle*, as our twelve *Moneths*, do ours.

Some *Writers* of the *Carribbe-Iſlands*, affirm, that this *Ceremony*, of carrying of *Victuals* to the *Dead*, is generall among them ; and that the *Devil* comes to the *Sepulchres*, and carries away the *Meat* and *Drink*. But I know the contrarie, having my ſelf taken away theſe *Offerings*, and eaten them ; for I knew that the *Fruits* uſed on theſe *Occaſions*, were of the choiceſt, and the *Liquors* of the beſt Sort. The Widow having compleated her *Year*, opens the *Grave*, and takes out all her Husbands *Bones* ; Theſe ſhe ſcrapes, and waſhes very well & puts them in a *Cabala*, or *Satchel*, & is obliged for another *year* to carry them upon her Back all *Day*, and to ſleep upon them all *Night*, till the *Year* be out. Then ſhe hangs up the *Bagg* and *Bones*, againſt the *Peſt* of her own *Door*, if ſhe be a *Miſtreſſe* of an *Houſe*, if not ſhe hangs them at the *Door* of her

next

next Neighbour, or Relations.

The *Widows* cannot marrie the ſecond time, according to their Cuſtoms, till after two *Years* End; the *Men* are bound to perform no ſuch *Ceremonys* for their *Wives*; But if anie *Pirrat* marrie an *Indian* Woman, ſhe is bound to do in all things as if he were an *Indian*.

I ſhall proceed now to give you an Account of the *Men*, *Women*, and their *Habits*;

They wear as an *Ornament* in their *Noſes*, a *Gold*, or *Silver-Plate*, in *Form* of an *Half-Moon*; which when they drink, they hold up with one *Hand*, while they lift up the *Cup* with the other. The *Men* paint themſelves ſometimes with *Streaks* of *Black*, and the *Women* with *Red*. The *Women* have in their *Noſes* a pretty thick *Ring* of *Gold* or *Silver* and cover themſelves with a *Blanket* only. They are generally well featured: Among whom I ſaw ſeverall fairer than the faireſt in *Europe*, with *Hair* as white as the fineſt *Flax*. 'Tis reported of them, that they ſee better in the Dark, than in the Light.

I ſhall further give You an Account of our going up the country to their *King* or chief *Captain*; we marching from our *Fort* with Captain *Andreas*, and other of their *Princes*: We began our March towards their head Place, where their *King* reſided, firſt through a ſmall *Skirt* of a *Wood*, and then over a *Bay* almoſt three *Miles*, or a *League* in Length. After that We went about ſix or ſeaven *Miles* up a woody *Valley*, and We ſaw here and there ſome old *Plantation*, and had a very good Path to march in. There we came to the ſide of a *River*, which in moſt places was dry, and built Us *Houſes*, or rather *Hutts*, to lodge in.

The *Indians* forbad us to ly upon the *Graſs*, for Fear of monſtrous

monſtruous *Adders*, which are very frequent in thoſe places.

Breakeing ſome of the *Stones* that lay in the *River*, We found them ſhine with *Sparks* of *Gold*; Theſe Stones were driven down from the neighbouring *Mountains* in Time of *Floods*.

The next day of our March We mounted a very ſteep *Hill*, and on the other ſide, at the *Foot* thereof, We reſted on the *Bank* of a *River*, which Captain *Andreas* told us, ran into South *Sea*, being the ſame River on which the Town of *Santa Maria* was ſituated. Hence We continued our March till about *Noon*, and then aſcended another Mountain, far higher than the former; Here We were often, and in many places in great Danger, the Mountain being ſo nigh to a *Perpendicular*, and the *Path* ſo narrow, that but one Man at a Time could paſs, We arrived in the *Evening* on the other Side of the Mountain, and lodg'd again by the Side of the ſame River.

Next *Morning*, We march'd all along the River aforemention'd, croſſing it often, almoſt at ev'ry half Mile, ſometimes up to the *Knees*, and at other times up to the Middle, in a very rapid current. About Noon we came to a place, where we found ſome *Indian* Houſes, Theſe were very large, and neat: The ſides were built of *Cabbage*-Trees, and the Roofs of wild *Canes*, thatch'd with *Palmito-Royal*; They had many Partitions, or diſtinct Ground-Roomes, but no Aſcent by *Stairs*. At this place were four of theſe Houſes together, all within a Stone's throw of one another, each of them haveing a large *Plantan* Walk before it. Half a Mile from this place, liv'd the *King*, or chief *Captain* of the *Indians* of *Darian* whe came to viſit Us in Royal *Robes*, with his *Queen*, and *Family*. His *Crown* was made of ſmall white *Reeds* curiouſly

riouſly woven, having no other *Top* than its lineing, which was red *Silk*. Round about the middle of it was a thin plate of *Gold*, about two Inches broad, lac'd behind, in which ſtuck two or three *Oſtrich* Feathers. About this Plate went alſo a Row of golden Beads, which were bigger than ordinar *Peaſe*; underneath which was ſeen the red lining of the *Crown*. In his Noſe he wore a large Plate of Gold, in Form of an half-*Moon*; and in each Ear a great gold Ring, nigh four Inches diameter with a round thin plate of Gold of the ſame Breadth, having an ſmall Hole in the Center, by which it hung to the Ring. He was covered with a thin white *Cotton* Robe, reaching to the ſmall of his *Leggs*, and round its Bottom a Frienge of the ſame, three Inches deep; ſo that by reaſon of the length of this Robe, We could ſee no farther than his naked *Ancles*. In his Hand He had a long bright *Lance* as ſharp as any Knife. With Him He had three Sons each of them having a white Robe, and their Lances in their Hands, but ſtanding bare-headed before Him; as alſo did eight or nine Perſons more of his Retinue, or Guard.

His *Queen* wore a red *Blanket*, which was cloſly girt about her *waſt*, and another that came loſely over her head and ſhoulders. She had a young child in her Arms, & two Daughters walked by her, with their Faces almoſt cov'red with ſtripps, or ſtreaks of red, and about their Necks, and Armes almoſt loaden with ſmall Beads of ſeverall Colours. Theſe *Indian* Women of *Darian*, are generally very free, airy, & brisk; yet withall very modeſt, and cautious in their Huſbands Preſence, of whoſe Jealouſie they ſtand in Fear. With theſe *Indians* We made an Exchaimge, or had a Truck, as it is called, for *Knives*, *Pins*, *Needles*, or any ſuch-like Trifles; but in our Dealing with them we found them to be very cunning.

He gave Us a Calabash full of Liquor which they make of *Plantans*; This sort of Fruit is first reduced to *Mash*, then laid betwixt Leaves of the same Tree, and so used with Water. After which Preparation, they call it *Miscelaw*. On our March hither We found in our Way, here, and there, an House or two, whose Owners commonly stood at the door, and gave, as we Passed by, to every one of Us, either a ripe *Plantan*, or else a *Cazave*, or some other sweet and pleasant *Root*.

This Captaine or King, is the head of their other Captains when they go to Battle against the *Spaniards*, somewhat to the South-ward of this Place is a pleasant *Plain*, the generall Place the *Indians* rendez-vous in.

I shall now give You an Account of the rest of their *Captains*.

Captain *Ambrosio* commands from the River *Pinas*, *Bononos*, *Mango*, and *Cocos*, to the *Samblas*, He is a Man above sixty, but strong and vigorous, a mortall Enemy to the *Spaniards*, with whom He has had long *War*; He is esteem'd the bravest, and most successfull of all their Commanders on every Occasion; He's of a middle Size, well made, strongly limb'd, and of a grave, and somewhat stern Countenance.

He has a Son in law, one *Pedro*, a brisk little Fellow who speaks good *Spanish*, haveing been a Slave to them at *Panama* for severall Years, and who can never forget, nor forgive, their Usage of him there.

Captain *Diego* commands from the Bottom of the Gulph of *Uraba* on this side to *Caret*-Bay, and has about 3000. Men under his Command; He is esteem'd the most powerfull amongst them, and has been at War with the *Spaniard* about

a twelve Month. The Occasion was this: The *Indians* haveing found three Gold Mines within his Jurisdiction, being two small ones, and a very great Vein, consulted with themselves what to do; And being sensible that they did not understand how to work them, concluded to discover them to the *Spaniards*, provided they'd allow them such a share of the Profit. This was agreed to, and faithfully promised by the *Spaniards*, but no sooner had the *Indians* shew'd the *Mines* but they shut up two of them, and put strong guards upon them, and fell to work upon the third, of which the *Indians* demanding their share, they beat and abused them, calling them their Slaves, and threatned to exterminat them, which provock'd them so, that a little time after, they sez'd upon 28. *Spaniards*, and 3. *Priests*, and cut them all to pieces.

The next to *Diego*, is one Captain *Powsga* of *Caret*-Bay, He is one of the *Indian* Clergy-Men, and commands that Part of the Coast which lyes between *Caret*-Bay, and golden Island; He is but a small Captain, and Brother-in-Law to *Andreas*.

The *Peninsula* which we possess, and which we found uninhabited (nor has it ever been by any heretofore, that we have yet hear'd of,) lys betwixt his Bounds, and Captain *Andreas*'s.

From *Golden-Island*, to the River *Pinas*, about a *League* to the *West-ward* of the *Isle* of *Pinas*, *Andreas*, and his Brother *Pedro* command, they are greater than *Powsgo*, but not so powerfull as *Diego*; yet their united Interests by Consanguinity, together with the Vicinity of their Commands to our Settlement, makes their Friendship of much greater Consequence.

Theſe People have had a good Correſpondence, for ſeverall *Years* paſt, with the *Spaniards*, and have ſuffered ſome of them to reſide among 'em to give an Account by Land to *Panama*, from time to time, who were upon this Coaſt about two months before our Arrivall here.

Captain *Ambroſio*, who has the adjoyning Command, forced them to enter into the common Confederacy, and cutt off ten *Spaniards* who lived on the *Main* of the golden-Iſland, I diſtinguiſh it thus, by reaſon the Natives call all the *Main* oppoſite to the Iſland, by the ſame Name that it bears. About a League from the Water ſide there is an high Mountain wherein they aſſure Us are ſeverall *Mines* of excellent *Gold*. The *Spaniards* are very ſenſible of this, and from time to time have taken great Care by fair or foul Means, never to let them be opned, well knowing that (being ſo near the *North-ſea*,) they ſhould have the leaſt ſhare of them to themſelvs.

Captain *Andreas* has often been at *Panama*, the *Mines* of *Santa Maria*, and the *South-Sea*; The *Spaniards* believeing he might be uſefull to them, made Him a Captain, by giveing Him a ſtick tip't with Silver, upon which He values himſelf above others, and that has (we are apt to believe) endeared Him to their Intereſts; yet the Love of ones Country, and Liberty is ſo naturall, that we have good Reaſon to believe that aſſoon (being a ſenſible cunning Fellow) as He finds we are able to protect Him, he will heartily join to our Intereſt.

Captain *Pedro* is eſteemed by *Ambroſio*, and all his People whoſe Daughter he has to VVife, as alſo two of her Daughters by himſelf, which is allowed here, yet it ſeems that they believe it a Crime, ſince if they have any children during the Life

Life of their mother, they are buried alive, (I mean the children) which is very ſtrange, that the innocent ſhould ſuffer for the guilty.

They preſt Us very hard to come and live by them, as alſo joyntly to make war with the *Spaniards*, whom they would engage upon the Forfaulture of their Heads, if we would aſſiſt them with an hundered arm'd Men, and as many Arms, with 2000. of their own People, to drive not only out of the *Mines*, (which are but three Days Journey from this Place,) but even out of *Panama* it ſelf. We gave them fair words, and promiſed to go to the *Weſt-ward* with them to view the Coaſts, and if there were any convenienter Harbour for our ſhips, we would be their Neighbours.

The *Sanblaz* to the River *Conception*, is commanded by one *Corbet*.

Next to *Corbet* from the River *Conception*, is one *Nicola*, a Man who ſpeaks *Spaniſh* as well as any naturall *Spaniard*, having been for about a dozen of Years of his Youth among them; He likewiſe reads and writes it perfectly, and underſtands the State of *Europe* very well: which none other of them have any Notion of; He is ſaid to be wiſe and extremly beloved by his People, for his Juſtice, and good Nature, in ſo much that there has been Deſigns to cut off *Ambroſio*, and place Him in his Room, for He is of a rough military temper, and often upon ſlight pretinces makes bold to take away what they have from them; However if they do not love him, they fear him, and his near Alliance, and ſtrick Friendſhip with *Diego* in the Gulph, a powerfull, and gallant old Fellow, renders Him very ſecure.

This *Nicola* was in good Terms with the *Spaniards* till about a twelve Month agoe, a Triffle made Him brake with them: and 'twas this; He

He had got an excellent French *Fuzie* from a *Buccanier*, which He valu'd extremly: 'Twas ſomewhat out of Order, nor did He know how to right it again; A Spaniſh *Don* from *Porto-Bello* being at his Houſe, told him he would carry it with Him, and get it mended for Him, which the other conſenting to, with a Deſire it might be return'd as ſoon as poſſible, They parted. The *Don* ſhew'd it to the Governour, who liked it extremly, and ſaid 'twas too good for an Heathen; So ordered an old ruſty *Match-Lock* to be ſent in Lieu. This He took ſo hainouſly, that He fell upon the *Spaniards* wherever He found 'em, and cut them off, neither is He to be reconſil'd to them.

Ambroſio who all the reſt allow to be the moſt dareing, and brave, as alſo the moſt faithful to his Promiſe; being a true Friend, and a moſt inveterat Enemy to the *Spaniards*: keeps Him within Bounds.

From the mouth of the River *Coco*, about a good League We went to *Ambroſio*'s Houſe, it ſtanding upon the Bank of this River, with about ten or a Dozen leſſer Houſes about it. When We came near, *Ambroſio* advanc'd about fifty Paces, with twenty Followers, all cloath'd in white looſe *Frocks*, with *Frienges* round the Bottom, and *Lances* in their Hands.

He ſaluted Us kindly, and gave Us a Calabaſh full of Liquor almoſt like *Lambs-Wool*, which they call *Miſtlow*, being made of Indian *Corn*, and *Potatoes*. This they get drink withall often; Before the houſe, about twenty Paces it was very ſmooth and clean. The houſe was about 60. Foot in Length, 35. in *B*readth, and 30. in *H*eight. I was curiouſly thatch'd with *Palmetto-Royal*, and over that *Cajan* Leavs, The *Floor* was of a firm *Earth*, like *Tarras*, very ſmooth, and

clean

clean. The *Sides* were of large *Canes*, about the Bigneſs of a Mans Legg, and near an *Inch* aſunder.

In this Houſe live *Ambroſio*, and *Pedro* with their whole Familys, in all about 40. Perſons.

There was an old Woman who cook'd their Victuals for them, and was very ſtirring about the Houſe; She ſeem'd to Us to be near ſixty. (and was *Ambroſio*'s Grand-Mother) but upon asking Her Age, We were inform'd She was an hundred and twenty; We could not believe it, and were perſuaded they muſt miſtake in the Computation of Time: but as an infallible Demonſtration, they ſhew'd to Us the ſixth Generation of this Womans Body in the Houſe, which was indeed very ſurpriſeing; And we were aſſured 'twas common amongſt them to live 150. or 60. Years; Yea 'tis obſerved thoſe of them who converſe often with the *Europeans*, & drink their ſtrong Liquors, are ſhort liv'd

While We ſtay'd there, *Ambroſio*, and *Pedro* went out with their *Guns* to kill ſome *Fowl* for Us; *Pedro* return'd with ſome *Partridges*, the largeſt, and beſt that e're I ſaw, being bigger than our *Capons*, and exceeding ſweet.

On *November* 30. Captain *Andreas* came a-board the St *Andrew*, We waiting an Oportunity of clearing ſome Suſpicions We had of his Correſpondence with the *Spaniard*, We taxt Him with it, and He ingeniouſly confeſt that the *Spaniards* had been friendly to Him, and had made Him a *Captain*; that He was obliged for his Safty to keep fair with them, They aſſureing Him We were nothing but *Privateers*, who had no Deſign to ſettle, but to plunder both *Spaniards*, and *Indians*, and be gone in two or three Months time, as they uſed to do, and if ſo, if He aſſiſted Us in any Meaſure,

as

as ſoon as We were gone, they'd deſtroy both Him, and His.

VVe gave Him all poſſible Aſſurances of the Contrary, ſo that He was fully ſatisfied, and deſired we would give Him a *Commiſſion*, and receave Him, and his People into our Protection; which if we did, He'd give Us all his Right to his part of the Country. VVhereupon a *Commeſſion* was ordered for Capt. *Andreas*, and being read and approven of, it was delivered to Him.

The *Commiſſion* being read, and rendered *Verbatim* to Him in *Spaniſh*, He agreed to every *Article*: then before 7 or 8 of his own People, and ſeverall of ours, it was delivered unto Him with a broad Basked-hilted *Sword*, and a Pair of *Piſtolls*, with which He ſolemly promiſed to defend Us to the laſt *Dropp* of His Blood, againſt all our Enemys.

Upon Advice of the *K.* of *Spain's* Indiſpoſition, *Count Montizeuma* Vice-Roy of *Mexico*, born in that Kingdom, and of the Race of theſe great Emperors, had made ſuch an Intereſt that 'tis not to be doubted that he will ſpeedily ſet up for himſelf.

Carthagena has likewiſe been in a civil *War*, which is only covered, not quencht.

At *Porto-Bell* about 700. Slaves got into a Body, which in a little time encreaſt to above 1500. The Governour not being able to ſuppreſs them, was forced to come to very diſhonourable Terms, *viz.* to allow them to be a free People independent o the *Spaniards*, and only call'd their Friends.

Captain *Powſigo* of *Caret*-Bay, told us of ſeverall *Go'd-Mines* within two Miles of us, and ſhew'd us a *Sample* of the *Gold*, which was extraordinary fine.

FINIS.